12/26/74

Mr. Herb Brubaker
NBC News
4001 Nebraska Ave., NW
Washington, D.C.

Dear Herb,

If it will not hurt you and if you think anyone at NBC really gives a damn about news and what it reports - considers it anything but merchandize - then I'd appreciate your forwarding this to whatever executive made the negative decision on what I recently offered NBC through you.

Events were not long in making much more topical what was by any standards significant news, news requiring reporting by honest newsmen. In fact, by normal news standards, the recent exposures about CIA illegalities make my new book even more topical and more significant. Three people at NBC (alone among nets) have copies. Nobody has been in touch with me. Not even with the courtesy of saying "no" so I would be free to go elsewhere.

By the standards current when I started writing news more than 40 years ago (when I was a kid and made it possible for a colleague to win a Pulitzer) and by those I've observed on most stories since I stopped writing news and turned to books, two of the more obviously newsworth and entirely new contents of this book are:

The word of Allen Dulles, when he expected his words to be TOP SECRET in perpetuity, that the head of the CIA and all under him would lie and perjure to anyone (he exempted the president but he had a personal record of having lied to two, Eisenhower on the Powers U-2 flight and JFK on the Bay of Pigs);

The editing out of this transcript by the man now President of everything in it that reflected on the CIA, the hiding of his editing, and, in fact, his having committed a felony in stealing the TOP SECRET and selling it for personal profit.

These two of the more obviously newsworthy new disclosures combine. Ford is now President. He supposedly is "investigating" Constitutional and law violations. And he is doing this by taking the word of the CIA's head. Yet he has a record of covering up for it and its former head certifies they all lie, lie to the point of committing felonies.

Here we go again! Watergate still with us, the Watergate that was possible only because of the abdications of the press and lingers only because it never investigated and exposed when it was supposed to.

There never has been any real secret about the spooks' abuses. They merely have not been reported. For one aspect they have a special "front" set up. I'm trying to sell this story, so I give it to you in confidence only. With the record of the major media, I am reduced to trying to peddle it to a scandal sheet. I offered it to a major magazine two months ago. No interest.

This "front" is what is called a "cut-off," sometimes "cut-out." (I was in intelligence in World War II and before that I worked for British Intelligence, volunteer.) It uses commercially-available facilities for surveillance of Americans inside the United States on what they say.

Beginning with a transcript of a conversation between the regional and national managers of this commercial outfit on whether they'd cover some of my appearances, I have the bills rendered for this service, carbon copies of verbatim transcripts of what I said, checks in payment, one original envelope in which payment was made (disclosing the cover return address) and a tape the pixie in me impelled me to make when I had a phone conversation with the national manager. (He told me I have the "all-time track record" for their interest within his experience.)

This means that I have the identification of the front, a number of its people, its bank account and at least part of its functions that no matter how disguised or gilded is spying on Americans inside the United States.

You will remember that not too long after Watergate I took NBC news non-clandestine tapes of Howard Hunt describing how, when he was officially in CIA, he urged the assassination of a head of state. And that it took more more than two months to get them back. Months later the story did get leaked but received little attention because of other developments. When I offered it exclusively to NBC News it was, by normal news standards, an important story.

The experience with that story is what made me decide to do the kind of Watergate book I was by then confident would not be done. I'm almost at the end of the draft. I've been delayed by other work, including that as James Earl Ray's investigator. There is an enormous amount not yet reported. It is much "seamier" than anything yet reported. And almost all those parts are CIA parts. Developing the information and proofs was a snap. I intend this as a commentary on the state of investigative reporting at a time when the media should be capable of the best investigative reporting and does virtually none.

Before I took that tape in two forms and transcriots to NBC I had carried this work much farthur. I had located other CIA fronts in Washington, some of the work done, some of the personnel (including a since-disappeared "Mexican connection," with his Mexico City office on the right street), some of the domestic political activity - involving Ford! - and without leaving home had located the CIS "station" for Washington, for all the world as though this, too, is an enemy power to it. But with Hunt still a mysterious figure and with him as assassin not news to NBC, was there any point in making any further effort?

You should remember the disinterest in my book on the King assassination when I took it to NBC. There were enough requests for me to have to buy copies to give all those who wanted them. But even the local outlet would not give me equal time to respond to Bill Huie, who it had aired separately and has to this day never aired any other side. That book was loaded with news. It has been affirmed all the way to the Supreme Court in what it led to. There is another issue at the Supreme Court level now, with arguments to be presented to it by January 6 on whether it will grant cert. We - largely my young colleague in the new book, Jim Lesar - have established a precedent and the State is appealing. And what we have developed in documentary form about Constitutional abuses makes those in the Ellsberg case seem modest. We confirmed this in open court in the recent hearing in Memphis. We then also presented what amount to total exculpation to the degree we could as we addressed the legal issue of effectiveness of counsel. This included proof of what amounts to if it is not in fact federal perjury. There was no cross examination and not even pro forma rebuttal. NBC News was there, but it reported none of these courtroom-tested facts. About the most costly crime in history these kinds of authentical facts are not news?

We all makes mistakes of judgement and those who decide what news will not be reported are not immune to normal, human error. However, this incomplete record between NBC News and me is, I think, not explained as simple judgemental errors. I think it does represent what is not an NBC monopoly, policy decisions against legitimate news reporting. The net effect is to make the major media the apologetic arm of government on the more basic stories. I do not think the country can long survive it as we have known it. I do think that if any executives take a retrospective look, they will find an increasing authoritarianism creeping up on us. It coincides with the predominance of TV in news.

I wish I could believe that somebody up there gave a damn.

Sincerely,

HaroldWeisberg
Rt. 8, Frederick, Md. 21701